



Indiana Department of Education

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Jeffery P. Zaring
State Board of Education Administrator

SUBJECT: Credit by Demonstration of Proficiency

DATE: August 24, 2007

[Indiana Code 20-36-5](#) provides that a student shall receive credits toward graduation by demonstrating the student's proficiency in a course, whether or not the student has completed course work, by one or more defined methods. This provision is included within the Article of the Indiana Code which deals with high ability students. The opportunity afforded by the statute, therefore, is available only to high ability students as defined in [Indiana Code 20-36-1-3](#).

The Department believes the words "shall receive credits" are mandatory in this context. While a school may have discretion to provide or not provide the mechanism for students to demonstrate proficiency (end of course examinations, for example), the school does not seem to have discretion to refuse to award credit if a student completes a qualifying experience.

The statute establishes the following methods to earn credit by demonstrating proficiency:

- (1) Receiving a score that demonstrates proficiency on a standardized assessment of academic or subject area competence that is accepted by accredited postsecondary institutions.
- (2) Receiving a high proficiency level score on an end of course assessment for a course without taking the course.
- (3) Successfully completing a similar course at an eligible institution under the postsecondary enrollment program under [IC 20-30-11](#). [Effective July 1, 2007, this chapter is recodified as IC 21-43-4.]
- (4) Receiving a score of three (3), four (4), or five (5) on an advanced placement examination for a course or subject area.
- (5) Other methods approved by the state board.

Some of the language is clear and needs no clarification. Some of the language may benefit from clarification and standardization. The Department has authority to adopt guidelines to implement this chapter, and the State Board has the authority to adopt rules which would have the force and effect of law. In order to determine if there is a need to adopt rules and guidelines to implement these provisions we conducted an online survey at the direction of the State Board. The survey and results are attached.

IC 20-36-5 Alternative Methods of Earning High School Credit Survey Results

[Indiana Code 20-36-5](#) provides that a student shall receive credits toward graduation by demonstrating the student's proficiency in a course, whether or not the student has completed course work, by one or more defined methods. This provision is included within the Article of the Indiana Code which deals with high ability students. The opportunity afforded by the statute, therefore, is available to high ability students as defined in [IC 20-36-1-3](#).

The word “shall” is mandatory in this context. While a school may have discretion in providing the mechanism for students to demonstrate proficiency (end of course examinations, for example), the school does not seem to have discretion to refuse to award credit if a student completes a qualifying experience.

The statute established the following methods to earn credit by demonstrating proficiency:

- (1) Receiving a score that demonstrates proficiency on a standardized assessment of academic or subject area competence that is accepted by accredited postsecondary institutions.
- (2) Receiving a high proficiency level score on an end of course assessment for a course without taking the course.
- (3) Successfully completing a similar course at an eligible institution under the postsecondary enrollment program under [IC 20-30-11](#). [Effective July 1, 2007, this chapter is recodified as IC 21-43-4.]
- (4) Receiving a score of three (3), four (4), or five (5) on an advanced placement examination for a course or subject area.
- (5) Other methods approved by the state board.

The State Board of Education and the Department of Education are attempting to determine if there is a need to adopt rules and guidelines to implement this provision, and we request your assistance. Some of the language is clear and needs no clarification. Some of the language may benefit from clarification and standardization derived from our common understanding or consensus. The Board and Department have concluded the following in regard to the methods set forth in the statute and present the following questions for your response:

Question 1

(1) Receiving a score that demonstrates proficiency on a test that is accepted by an accredited postsecondary institution – This method of earning credit is driven by postsecondary institutions. The evidence of demonstrating proficiency, presumably in the form of credit on a transcript, will be maintained by the institution and verified to the high school, which can use the available “college credit” course titles to award high school credit. Schools will have to adopt a policy to determine a grade for the course because grades must be included for the Core 40, Core 40 with Academic Honors, and Core 40 with Technical Honors Diplomas. While the Department may be able to maintain a list of tests for reference purposes, the only state action that may be required is to define “accredited postsecondary institution” to prevent any pressure to acknowledge credit awarded by so-

called “diploma mills.” The Department tentatively proposes to define “accredited postsecondary institution” as an institution that offers a baccalaureate or associate degree and is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or the U.S. Department of Education. Do you believe this is adequate?

Question 1 Responses

52 Yes

5 No

Question 1 Comments

- If the Core40 tests and ISTEP tests skills, schools should have the creativity and autonomy to teach the skills.
- Might there be situations in which a student not previously identified as "high ability" may pass one of these assessments? Would that present a problem, as these provisions are designed for high ability students?"
- Many universities are implementing more and more online courses. Are we concerned about students receiving credit for work done by someone else? How will we handle online courses in regard to verification of coursework completed by a student?
- If the standard is adequate for awarding an associates or baccalaureate degree, that standard should be adequate to award a high school diploma.
- As long as postsecondary" is defined, I believe this will be adequate."
- Only if the accredited postsecondary institution provides a transcript with a grade... It is a lot to ask a school to assign a grade to a test created and/or given by another institution.
- Who is responsible for the course matriculation fees...the student or the school district?
- If the grade may be Pass/Fail, then this provision seems adequate at the moment. Since we are trying to provide for students who may wish to diminish their time spent in K-12, then consistent, written, assessed acknowledgement of what content they know in a certain discipline is adequate.
- I believe it is acceptable if there is consistency among the various institutions that are offering it. I believe I am correct in stating that Purdue University currently is not accepting dual credit high school courses for students who attend. Other college/universities in our area are accepting the dual credit, but if a student is attending Purdue he/she may complete the same work and not be granted any credit.

- If you let every school adopt its own policy regarding the determination of grades then how can that be adequate. Every school will have its own policy making it unreliable.
- In answering yes, I am assuming that it is meant that students would continue to have the dual-credit opportunities or the Fast Track approach (through Ivy Tech). Other courses that could fall into this category would be correspondent courses offered through IU, or Brigham Young.
- critical to make sure it is an accredited institution! Too many diploma mills lurking around.
- Credit from the postsecondary institution could be on a pass/fail basis. Then the school, who doesn't know what the criteria for the credit was is supposed to assign a grade for the credit. This has the potential to create problems for the school with prerequisite courses, GPA, class rank and a variety of other.
- May high schools use Pass/Fail as grades on the high school transcript, or must a letter grade (A, B,...) be used?
- It is adequate if accredited" means something. If institutions can find a way around what is expected, this could significantly undermine this effort."
- I would like the grade portion to go further and reflect the grade awarded by the postsecondary institution to be the grade accepted by the high school.
- A qualified yes. My concern here is that the college courses will not focus upon or address Indiana's academic standards; therefore, there is a potential that students will not be adequately prepared to take a follow-up course or do well on future assessment given by the school or state."
- The concept of providing a grade for a student that tested out of a class has great impact on GPA and class rank. We would be supportive of granting credit however, not for assigning a grade to a course.

Question 2

(2) Receiving a high proficiency level score on an end of course assessment for a course without taking the course – Core 40 End of Course Assessments (ECAs) are established by law and will count under this method of earning credit. The statute requires that students receive a “high proficiency level score” to earn credit, but the State Board and Department believe the current achievement standards (passing scores) are sufficiently demanding. Core 40 ECAs are aligned with Indiana’s Academic Standards, the passing scores were established through a formal standard-setting process, and the scoring process has demonstrated reliability. Locally developed tests may not have gone through the same alignment and standard-setting process, and the Department recommends that credit by demonstration of proficiency will be accomplished only through Core 40 ECAs for those courses where Core 40 ECAs exist. Do you believe this is appropriate?

Question 2 Responses

45 Yes

11 No

Question 2 Comments

- What if a student takes the course and fails according to the school standards but passes the ECA? Won't we have to give credit since he would have gotten credit if he hadn't taken the course?
- If a cut score is good enough to earn credit at the end of the course a student has taken, it should be good enough for a student that takes the test without taking the course. No matter how many standard-setting processes" you put a test through, it still provides a snapshot. We are testing skills that are important, no doubt. However, they are not typically skills used everyday in the workforce and therefore the process of understanding and showing proficiency on the skill is the most important thing. Looking at current Core 40 tests, there are many "Jeopardy" questions. Questions that are recall of minute skills needed early in the course but not necessarily reinforced over the duration of the course. Basing understanding on a snapshot is difficult to defend. Performance in a course over time, can be a good determiner of proficiency as well even though the snapshot test may not concur."
- I believe that the tests must continually be validated for the purpose and should not be locally developed tests.
- I believe there should be some way to track the students who have actually taken the course and those who are taking the Core 40 end of course assessment to try and test out" of the course (this is really reflective of placement tests given prior to entering major colleges). This differentiation between post-course and pre-course testing purposes will be important as each school is assessed for AYP on students passing. It will also be a valuable source of data concerning how often this option is actually utilized."
- The level of competency must be clearly defined. The rules (who takes the test, who administers the test, how often can a student take it, what if the passing score, recommended grading scale, etc.) should be clearly defined before offering the opportunity.
- How will the courses without ECAs be addressed?
- In our opinion, Core 40 tests are not good tests.
- I believe there should be state-wide uniformity in order to maintain credibility. It is possible that some locally developed tests might exceed the established uniformity and be, in fact, more difficult. However, if statewide the students are expected to demonstrate a proficiency of the same achievement standards then the system should work.

- Most colleges do not give" credit for earning a proficient score. They only allow that student to take a higher course in the area. Why are we as high schools allowing this. Are we educating or trying to get them out of school quicker? The smaller schools will not be able to keep up with the larger schools as far as class options for higher level classes."
- More study is needed to determine the appropriateness of such a practice. In theory, couldn't a person test out of high school altogether without attending? Isn't there something to be said for the socializing elements of the classroom experience?
- I think we would want this provision when enrolling a student from a 'non-accredited school (i.e. home school) and was trying to determine basis for awarding credits for work completed. Would the Core 40 End of Course Assessments be available on demand so as we could administer to not only determine credit but also educational placement?"
- I would agree that the Core 40 ECAs are demanding. This would work well as a test for students returning to public education after being home schooled. I would assume that the Core 40 tests would be available on line for this type of testing that might occur anytime during the year.
- How ever the taking of theses exams going to be limited to certain times of the year or will a student be able to access on own at any time and the state then send the scores to the student and the school. It should not be the schools responsibility to set up these times, it should be done from home, community library or during the assigned windows of testing at schools. I>E a freshman may opt to test with juniors or a 7th grader may opt to take alg 1. Will their be an age limit, I do not think their should be.
- Personally, I like to have local control over this issue. While I can see the need for a more formalized process to ensure statewide accuracy and accountability, certain schools have a rigorous program in place that already calls for end of course assessments. My school for example is a HSTW site and that is one item that we have been working on for a few years now.
- A course such as English eleven which we have the core 40 testing for does not cover all the material that a student would be exposed to in a semester long course. While the student may demonstrate proficiency, there is much to be gained by the classroom experience, the writing, presentations, research and many other skills that are learned in the classroom.
- Would letter grades need to be assigned for such courses, or would these be indicated a Pass" on the high school transcript?
- This can be helpful only if a more complete number of ECAs are developed for the core academic subjects. While the number is growing, more ECAs would be needed.
- Again the issue of grades occurs. Ideally scores on the ECA would reflect the corresponding grade assigned. For example the current passing score could

receive a B while a higher score (similar to the Pass Plus concept) would be established for the A.

- This just needs to be sure to include the clarification that a high proficiency level score" is the same as a passing score."
- Not all material covered in a course can be tested on an end of course assessment.
- Although assessments in the state need to be revised to match Ken Kay's proposed 21st Century Skills instruction. Current assessment is only compatible with 20th Century traditional pedagogy.
- This assessment provides a uniform method of concept attainment throughout the state.

Question 3

For some other courses, state-developed classroom assessments exist. The assessments are aligned with Indiana's Academic Standards, but no achievement standards (passing scores) have been established. Do you believe it would be beneficial to establish achievement standards for the classroom assessments?

Question 3 Responses

47 Yes

8 No

Question 3 Comments

- Until this happens, we won't know how to teach to the test. We have so many standards that a student would be in school until they are 30 if we address them all. The state already prioritizes the standards by determining what is important enough to test. We need to see the priorities of the test and maybe even the ranking of the standards so we know what will be tested. The secrecy of what is on the test is the opposite of best practice which includes: informing of students what is expected and what will be tested, then holding them accountable. Holding schools accountable for priorities not shared is very difficult to defend.
- Again, state developed classroom assessments must undergo validity and reliability tests periodically to assure that they contain the rigor required. The same applies to the cut scores.
- Please note -- teachers and districts need help with establishing what is consistent quality.
- If these tests are going to be utilized for AYP in any way, they must have valid passing scores.

- This is micromanagement of local educational decisions and teacher practice.
- We would have to do some training for educators to understand this idea. Delineating performance levels is very difficult for some to understand. Many teachers still award grades and scores based on the quantity of knowledge displayed, not on the presence or absence of specific qualities. So, yes, but with caveats. This will be a reorganization of how we view student performance data at yet another level. At this point the quality of the teaching may become an issue..... And maybe it's time for that.
- If the assessments are aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards for the course in question, then the assessments should be valid. I think it is possible to overdo assessments and in doing so lose the credibility of the system. This is not the intended goal.
- It would make sense to establish passing scores especially if schools were going to use the assessments as indicators have earning a credit in the class.
- Yes, it is always beneficial to establish standards.
- I need clarification: Grades must be included for ANY course (such as an elective) or just for those that represent required courses?
- If schools will be expected to award credit, there should be a standard established to give some consistency.
- Again, not everything taught or mastered can be measured in one assessment.
- AT minimum, I would expect the achievement standards to represent at least a 75% level of competency for the standards tested.
- Use Rubrics...authentic assessment

Question 4

Schools may want to develop their own end of course tests. To ensure the high proficiency level required by the statute, the Department believes schools must have an opportunity to demonstrate alignment of the test with the academic standards, reliability of the scoring method, and the rigor of the procedure used to arrive at the passing score. The Department believes this can be accomplished through a peer review process. Such a process also could result in the ability to share tests among school corporations. Do you believe this is appropriate?

Question 4 Responses

36 Yes
19 No

Question 4 Comments

- Someone would need to monitor and organize this. Is the IDOE going to provide financial assistance to support and organize this? I don't think the reliability could be guaranteed.
- There is no way the state has the resources to accomplish this properly. Go back to Question 3. It is obvious that the state wants all classes to be in lock step. Give us the lock step system so we can prepare for the lock step test. Question 4 will give the allusion of allowing for school autonomy. School autonomy and classroom autonomy left when AYP began in the courses being tested on ISTEP. Autonomy here refers to what is taught. There are still many ways teachers can be creative and individual during instruction.
- On paper this seems reasonable and a valid way to arrive at the tests. In practice, this could become a quick and expedient" way to get your corporation's tests approved."
- This practice fosters teacher ownership.
- This is a cumbersome process that is appropriate only if we have sufficient funding to accomplish the peer review at the state level, in my view. If in the case of a school district (Fort Wayne Community for example) where they have been using their own assessments long enough and in large enough numbers to have norms (at least district norms) established, then maybe those assessments could be peer-reviewed and shared. Schools might want to charge a fee for the materials they have developed and copyrighted. Turf issues might result if fees are not allowed. Districts that have worked hard to develop assessments might not take kindly to freely sharing what they have worked so hard on for years.
- While this is a good idea in principle, I can see some problems in implementation.
- Stay with the Core 40 ECA tests or tests developed by the DOE.
- Individual schools should operate under the state mandates and Indiana Academic Standards and teach as best fits their LEA. What works successfully in one school may or may not work in another, this does not mean that students in each school are not mastering the skills they need to achieve. It merely means they have different learning climates, possibly different means to learn in the community (colleges in community vs. rural isolated schools) and that their parents, community and school corporation have learned what works best for them. If we want to share tests among school corporations there is nothing stopping us now from doing that, but there is also nothing which states we have to have the same exact tests when we have used different curriculum to meet the Indiana Academic Standards.
- All schools should have the same end of course tests. Schools are being judged on their ISTEP scores etc. and reliability will be an issue if each school develops their own tests.

- It seems that it would be very, very difficult to maintain an objective standard across all schools.
- I am unsure as to whether this would be acceptable or not at this time
- I think this would provide consistency and accountability throughout school systems. I also believe that a team of qualified teachers would work together to write the tests and then every school corporation in the state would use the same test.
- I believe every test should be created by the state and therefore schools will not have a problem accepting credits from each other when a student comes in and says oh no I earned that credit by testing out on a 10 question exam. There will be too many inconsistencies. The state needs to use a peer review panel to develop an exam for each course and then it will be consistent and not questioned from district to district. Also would avoid parents moving kids because one district's exams or process is easier than another district.
- Great idea...there is so much mobility amongst students that this would ensure a more stable statewide process while giving a lot of the control to LEA's.
- Schools are in competition with one another daily. For consistency and fairness, the tests should be developed at the state level with various elements of the classroom experience.
- I believe there would need to be guidelines for the peer review process. I have a concern about reliability and validity of locally developed instruments. It seems this would be rather hard to achieve and too difficult to have consistent measures from district to district. If these issues can be addressed, then I think this could be a viable method for granting credit.
- Not all corporations are as rigorous and not all assessments measure the rigor.
- Only if the peers are adequately trained in student directed learning.
- I like this idea. My question/concern is the time it will take to develop and implement such a review process. An additional concern--to Method #2) is the static nature of approved exams. At the building level, we have the ability to adjust assessments, as needed, for a variety of reasons. How will the state handle revisions, updates, the need for multiple versions of the same exam, etc.?
- ...in these matters, it would be very difficult to get everyone on the same page. Alignment would be a great challenge.
- The DOE should establish the standard for the end of the course assessment.

Question 5

Schools will have to adopt a policy to determine a grade for the course because grades must be included for the Core 40, Core 40 with Academic Honors, and Core 40 with Technical Honors Diplomas. Do you agree?

Question 5 Responses

35 Yes

21 No

Question 5 Comments

- I think there needs to be standardization in this. I think the state should come up with a recommended policy.
- IDOE needs to provide guidelines or schools will be giving different grades for the same scores.
- It would be best to have a statute that answers questions like: Can these courses be weighted if the school uses a weighted GPA? Should all college courses be pass/fail rather than a grade? We are in a very, very gray area here. IVY Tech vs. Notre Dame credits? Are they the same? Notre Dame intro to psychology vs. IVY Tech technical writing course? Do we count them in the content area or just as an elective credit? Statute would make the decisions consistent from school to school.
- The major issue here is that not all schools use the same grading scale. If this will be tied to the state diploma requirements, a straight percent passing/mastery (no curve) will be more appropriate in lieu of a letter grade.
- I believe that since this is a state ECA, there should be a state grading scale solely for the purpose of awarding a credit without taking the course.
- Will there be some guidelines for those grades?
- I hope that schools will want to develop policies AND implementation plans. A change is more likely to happen if one has procedures, timelines, and rules for implementation, and a person/role named to do the work.
- The DOE should also set the grade levels for the State
- Schools should already have their grade policies implemented, approved by their LEA, and working. Why is there a need to develop a new grading policy?
- Allowing this to be handled locally is not a good idea. Deciding the grade to be assigned is too arbitrary. Grades are used to determine class rank. This is already a hotly contested issue. I think this holds real potential for problems that could undermine the good intentions behind this bill.

- The grades will not be reliable if every school has a different weighted system and grading scale.
- Yes, especially if the school uses a GPA/rank-in-class system.
- I do not want to determine a grade for a student based upon one test and then have that grade used in a GPA
- Again, this needs to be set by state. Example a student scoring above this level is an A, score above this level a B, mastery should be above 80 percent without it considered a none pass score and would have to take class or retake exam. Again, looking for consistency state wide the same for all and not by local control which has to much flexibility.
- This should be standardized from the state so all criteria for grades are the same.
- Could the state recommend grades for the AP scores?
- Consistency of the grading process may be an issue.
- I would agree if the standard was set for the state. Leaving it wide open allows for uneven application.
- See comments above.
- How will this be measured and consistent across schools?
- The establishment of a grade for a course assessment should not be conducted. Credit should be provided but no grade assigned.

Question 6

(3) Successfully completing a similar course at an eligible institution under the postsecondary enrollment program under IC 20-30-11 – This method also is driven by postsecondary institutions, and evidence will be in the form of a college transcript. This method is limited by its reference to IC 20-30-11, which defines “eligible institution” as an accredited public or private college or university located in Indiana that grants a baccalaureate or associate degree. Particularly for border areas of the state, the Department would prefer to broaden the opportunity to include accredited institutions as described in method (1) above. Do you agree?

Question 6 Responses

51 Yes
4 No

Question 6 Comments

- Some students take summer courses at out-of-state institutions. Those credits should be accepted.
- With internet access, this should take care of the problem.
- Makes sense.
- In my opinion, it needs to be broadened to include Internet course selections. What if a student wants to take a course from another university online in another state? Students in small isolated rural areas would have much more options available to them if they could enroll and complete classwork via Internet. With distance learning and video cams, it seems as feasible as driving to an area college or university.
- The institution would establish the grade and the public school would then use the grade. There would be consistency.
- Wouldn't this open it up to on-line courses offered by colleges anywhere? Won't that be unmanageable for the high schools to determine accreditation and to determine what high school course it is similar to?
- I agree that students should be allowed to obtain credit for courses from accredited public or private colleges/universities, but do not agree that the universities should be limited to school just within Indiana. There are universities around the country such as BYU and Oregon State that have excellent high school course programs. Both programs are accredited. School districts or the DOE need to research and/or review these programs ahead of time to insure they meet the set standard. You will find that these programs oftentimes exceed the Indiana standard.
-requires a great deal of coordination.

Question 7

(4) Receiving a score of three (3), four (4), or five (5) on an advanced placement examination for a course or subject area – This method is driven by AP results. Schools will have to adopt a policy to determine a grade for the course because grades must be included for the Core 40, Core 40 with Academic Honors, and Core 40 with Technical Honors Diplomas. No state action is required. Do you agree?

Question 7 Responses

41 Yes

12 No

Question 7 Comments

- AP Curricula are designed to include Socratic seminars, group discussion, and classroom experiences which lead to the awarding of credit. A passing score is not enough.
- I think the state should come up with a recommended policy on this.
- Make a recommendation so schools will be consistent.
- Prefer that the DOE determine the policy so it is standard across the state
- Once again, I believe a pass/fail or grade determination statute would be best here. Indiana University is now accepting the top 40% of graduating classes. If school A gives a student an "A" for a 3 on an AP test and school "B" gives a student a "B" for a 3 on the same test, and student from school A gets into IU because the "A" put them in the top 40%, is that equitable?"
- I want to add however, that the whole grade" issue is unfortunate. It should be about the learning and not about the grade."
- This is the same as above... the state should set the grading scale so that there is consistency across the board... a student should not get a 3" and a "C" grade in one area and an "A" grade in another area of the state. It sends a mixed message..."
- Wouldn't post-secondary institutions want to see all high schools use the SAME grade for a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP exams?
- Will there be guidelines for the grades?
- I can see the need for a school grade policy in this situation.
- As with many of these questions, specific situations or examples of specific situations can change my answer.
- Again I do not object to awarding credit, but oppose assigning a grade based upon one test. If necessary I would recommend the state change their requirement to allow a pass/fail assignment rather than a specific grade for this and similar provisions.
- Once again, I would say that all school corporations would have to agree and be consistent in the interpretation of what grade is assigned to a 3, 4, or 5.
- Again it should be set by state a 5 is an A, a 4 is a B, a three is a c, etc. again use a state panel of teachers to determine and then it will be same across board and fair and consistent.
- Except the grades should be established by the state on what a 3, 4, or ,5 equates to.
- Teacher/Counselor

- Maybe the state could suggest a range of scores converted to letter grades on a 4 point scale.
- Although I again would not object to the state deciding the grade that should be assigned on the transcript that corresponds to the scores.
- I don't agree with the necessity of assigning a grade, but I guess that isn't your question here.
- We do not support the use of grades in the establishment of this statute.

Question 8

(5) Other methods approved by the State Board – For more than 20 years, accredited schools have had an opportunity to award credit by demonstration of proficiency through the High Ability Program waiver in [511 IAC 6-9.1](#) and the Nonstandard Course Approval process in [511 IAC 6-8](#). At one time, a separate application was required, but the State Board later included it in the school improvement planning process and, more recently, it was embedded in statute.

Indiana Code 20-31-5-5 provides:

IC 20-31-5-5

Waiver of applicability

Sec. 5. (a) A [school improvement] plan may include a request for a waiver of applicability of a rule or statute to a school.

(b) The governing body may waive any rule adopted by the state board for which a waiver is requested in a plan, except for a rule that is characterized as follows:

- (1) The rule relates to the health or safety of students or school personnel.
- (2) The rule is a special education rule under 511 IAC 7.
- (3) Suspension of the rule brings the school into noncompliance with federal statutes or regulations.
- (4) The rule concerns curriculum or textbooks.

(c) Upon request of the governing body and under a plan, the state board may waive for a school or a school corporation any statute or rule relating to the following:

- (1) Curriculum.
- (2) Textbook selection.

Rather than preapprove “other methods,” which could lead to a cookie cutter approach, we believe it is appropriate to allow schools to develop local options. Ultimately, students could be able to earn credits by creating portfolios or completing projects, and this opportunity could extend across all curriculum areas. Do you believe this approach is appropriate?

Question 8 Responses

45 Yes

8 No

Question 8 Comments

- I think this makes it very difficult for the State to monitor the rigor of the programs. Do schools still have to submit a waiver and have it approved or not? I think this must continue to be requested and approved or some schools could award credit at a whim.
- However the entire waiver wording would need revision. When you approve creativity, textbooks and curriculum are effected. I read in the Star this morning that IPS is starting a New Tech High School and intends to give English credit for the study of Greek. Do they have a waiver? If so, doesn't that involve curriculum? If so, isn't that in violation of the code stated above? How does portfolios and projects fit into the desire for the standard-setting process" mentioned above. Aren't we talking out of both sides of our mouth here? How will the DOE determine if a project is rigorous enough for as student to earn credit?
- Institutions should have the opportunity to create independent research projects that are geared to the student's interests and talents.
- However, if the school or district does not come up with a good plan, the student will suffer! This needs to be pushed" to get schools to think out of the box. Right now, I know our area schools are not allowing this."
- At some point, local options get to be so diverse that it is hard to tell where we are headed. If we could just create a flexible cookie cutter that bends a little, but still has a recognizable shape, that'd be a comfort to schools who really would like some consistent guidance about what are the 'best' things to do for their high ability kids. What the community or school board chooses as a local option may not be, according to research, the best way to serve the kids. Why not prepare some guidelines for school districts to consider and to make choices from? That gives them local options" as well as giving them some guidance in an area where they may be little local expertise. "
- I am not sure I understand this, so I can not answer the above question.
- In some areas such as the arts (music, drama, art), this seems a more reasonable approach for students to demonstrate their talent or mastery" of the Indiana Academic Standards."
- Yes; however, I believe it is important that schools be required to submit their procedures and policies to make sure these policies have been developed and are really in place. Also, it should be required that schools include this information in their student handbooks and/or in their course description books to make sure the public is aware of this special provision.
- I think this deserves more discussion before implementation.
- I think local options are always a good idea. I like the idea of continuing to have the flexibility to set parameters for earning credits.

- The only way is if it is a state designed rubric that each school follows, again to much local control leads to much inconsistency and the question will always be grade inflation.
- You could have a lot of variations that really would not potentially measure the students knowledge compared to what would have been learned in the classroom.
- This seems very wide open.
- Authentic forms of demonstrating understanding and comprehension of concepts supports the differences that exist between and among students. As more emphasis is placed on differentiation, it is only natural that we should look for differentiated ways to assess knowledge as part of the differentiation triangle of content, process, and product.
- Only with careful monitoring.
- Exactly...
- The project based assessment should be subject to the analysis of the peer review concept as end of the course assessment.

Respondent's Stated Position

Building Administrator – 15
 Central Office Administrator – 23
 Teacher/Counselor – 9
 Other – 4
 Parent – 1

